7: Gulick E-5 (1952) 1955 ME1 Lebanon ME1

The table in the upper part of the *mafʿal* was moved away first, and dancing continued as before in the space provided. In moments when there was no dancing, solo songs were sung by one or another sitting around the circle. A complete silence fell over the crowd while the *shāʿir* sang many verses in sonorous Classical Arabic of the tragic epic of Qays and Layla, whose plot, though set among Bedawin of the Umayyad period, bears striking resemblance to that of the story of Romeo and Juliet. During the recitation, familiar to all, the peoples' faces seemed thoughtful and reflective, and there was applause when the song was finished. Usually there was no applause after the dances during which everyone was clapping in time anyway.

The couple subsequently took up residence in the groom's own house. Neolocal residence is not uncommon at the present time, and it appears to be preferred by most young couples.

This account requires comment at a number of points.

1. In contrast to funerals, weddings are attended only by those who are invited. In this case the number of those invited by the groom was said to be limited because it was his second marriage, and because two large families happened to be in mourning, hence it was not fitting for their members to attend. Weddings are forbidden outright during the major part of Lent. There is a general sense of the incompatibility of happy and sad events or periods, and these rules and practices have the purpose of avoiding conflicts in emotions.

2. Peghiadi (1955, pp. 296–97) writes in some detail of what he calls a mock battle, of a verbal sort, which takes place in Maronite mountain villages when the groom's party approaches the bride's house. The incident reported above might not deserve to be called a verbal "mock battle" at all, but there was a definite sense of the groom's party being stopped for a time before it was allowed to approach and enter the house.

3. Writing of marriage practices in a Palestinian Muslim village, Granqvist (1935, p. 40) says that since they are losing a daughter, the bride's family do not rejoice at the wedding, and the bride herself is supposed to behave in a sad and subdued manner during the ceremony and must weep before leaving her father's house (*ibid.* p. 43). The same concept appears to be held by Lebanese Christians, and the behavior of the bride was undoubtedly largely conventional. The conventional aspect of this matter would explain the general lack of concern for the bride's tears. In this connection it should be mentioned that, like the European Mediterranean peoples, the Lebanese see no reason to suppress the expression of strong emotions in public. In fact, they interpret the inexpressiveness of North Europeans and their American cousins as evidence of either heartlessness or "deep-ness." By the same token, women in labor are free to scream loudly even when they are not actually suffering acute pain.

4. In the Middle East generally, the chief traditional solo woman's dance is some variation of what is commonly known as the "belly dance," the basic move-

1. - [A newly married couple of the village -- Analyst]